

Lake Michigan Fisheries Team
November 18, 1999 - Sheboygan

Notes

(prepared by Bill Horns, November 22, 1999)

Present: Paul Peeters, Terry Lychwick, George Boronow, Steve Hogler, Mike Toney, Matt Coffaro, Gus Ernst, Brad Eggold, Brian Belonger, Pradeep Hirethota, Jim Moore, Tom Hansen, Steve Hewett, Steve Fajfer, Sue Marcquenski, Bill Horns, Fred Binkowski (UW-Milwaukee).

Next Meeting: Deland Center, Sheboygan, February 3-4, 1999.

This is a summary of decisions, recommendations, and planned actions arising from the November 18 meeting. It is not intended as a comprehensive review of all discussions.¹

- 1) Seasonal designations for Great Lakes tributary streams. **Policy.** The following statement adopted in September was ratified: *The LMFT, noting that most, if not all, Lake Michigan and Green Bay tributaries provide seasonal habitat for young and/or mature migrating trout, salmon, northern pike, and walleyes, recommends that those streams be protected at least seasonally under Ch. NR 104. We understand that the implementation of this recommendation has work load implications for LMFT members and recognize that staff time commitments are subject to review by GMU leaders.* **Action.** Steve Hogler circulated a draft form to be used to by managers to summarize information about trout and salmon use of tributary streams. Steve will circulate a revised form and asked that the completed forms be returned to him soon.
- 2) Criteria for re-opening commercial yellow perch fishing. The LMFT agreed to modify its earlier recommendation regarding the re-opening of commercial fishing for yellow perch in Lake Michigan. The following revised recommendation (I have inserted a clause as discussed at the meeting and also taken the liberty of making some editorial changes) is subject to review by the LMFT at the next meeting: *The LMFT recommends a) that any criteria for reopening commercial fishing for yellow perch on Lake Michigan be developed jointly with the other states, b) that the appropriate team members work with the Yellow Perch Task Group to develop criteria for review by the Lake Michigan Committee at its March meeting, and c) that no commercial fishing, except scientific assessments needed to determine whether those criteria have been met, be allowed before the Commercial Fishing Task Force has finished its work and new enforceable regulations are in place.*
- 3) Walleye stocking. The LMFT discussed the need for a formal Lake Michigan/Green Bay walleye stocking policy statement, to supplement existing correspondence regarding this issue, and decided that an additional policy statement is not needed.

¹ The LMFT charge requires that all team decisions or recommendations be considered during at least two meetings and requires that any recommendation developed at one meeting be ratified at the following meeting. Recommendations and decisions made at any meeting are considered ratified at the following meeting if summarized in the meeting's notes and not raised for discussion and review during consideration of the meeting's notes at the second meeting.

- 4) LMFT membership. The LMFT discussed expansion of the LMFT to include non-DNR members and recommended that the team not be expanded in this way.
- 5) Strawberry Creek. We discussed the operation of the Strawberry Creek facility. Paul will prepare a written summary of concerns and issues that were raised. I will talk with Chuck Burney and/or other engineers to develop a list of options (with approximate costs) for seasonally supplementing the flow into the Strawberry Creek pond. At our next meeting we will consider the options.
- 6) Spawning protocol. We discussed the perennial issue of spawning protocol. As I see it, there is still a gap between the ideals expressed in the existing protocol (I believe the current protocol is contained in the draft Broodstock Management Plan presented by Dave Ives in a 6/5/95 memo to the Broodstock Management Committee) and actual practices. The LMFT agreed to recommend to Steve Hewett that the new statewide production coordinator be assigned to work with the LMFT to revise and/or clarify the protocol so that it can be fully implemented and meets the needs of the Lake Michigan program.
- 7) LMIFMP revision. We discussed revision of the Lake Michigan Integrated Fisheries Management Plan. I recommended moving ahead with this, with a completion date sometime late next year. I also recommended forming a partnership group of some kind to work with us on the Plan revision. Some skepticism was expressed about my proposed timetable and team members have some remaining concerns about formal partnership teams. The LMFT agreed to establish a small committee (Horns, Moore, Coffaro) to develop a specific process and timetable for revision of the Plan. I hope we can adopt a process and timetable at our next meeting.
- 8) Charter fishing report. We discussed the need to move ahead with a public meeting to discuss the charter fishing report. Brad will draft a specific plan of action.
- 9) Sturgeon. Fred Binkowski and Brian Belonger presented overviews of current studies and initiatives related to sturgeon management in Lake Michigan and Green Bay. The LMFT asked Jim Moore to work with the Lake Michigan Committee take a more active role in lakewide sturgeon management.
- 10) Chub fishing incidental catch draft report. Mike Toney's circulated a draft report regarding onboard monitoring of commercial chub and whitefish monitoring. Comments should be submitted to Mike by December 3.
- 11) Surplus lake trout. We discussed the stocking of 80,000 surplus lake trout fall fingerlings in Indiana waters. I will request a fish health statement from USFWS regarding those fish.
- 12) FH Program Annual Report. I will draft a Lake Michigan overview for this document and share it with the LMFT before sending it to Karl Scheidegger.
- 13) Items for the next LMFT meeting. To items got short shrift, but will be discussed in greater detail next time: 1) Cormorants, specifically the development by the USFWS of a management plan. 2) Continued importation of exotic species in ballast water – what can we do about it?